



TEXAS HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

James White

*House District 19
Jasper, Newton, Hardin, Polk, Tyler*

CORRECTIONS
CHAIR

REDISTRICTING

JUDICIARY &
CIVIL JURISPRUDENCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, March 18, 2019

Contact: Saul Mendoza
(512) 463-0490

Texas House Announces the "Texas Plan" to Address Meaningful School Finance Reform - Weekly Legislative Update 3/8/19 -

(Austin, TX) - Texas House Speaker Dennis Bonnen, Public Education Committee Chairman Dan Huberty, and a coalition of Members of the House held a bipartisan joint press conference to announce the filing of House Bill 3, the "Texas Plan." The plan provides meaningful school finance reform, and represents the first major rewrite of our state's school finance system undertaken without threat of a court order.

Texas' current school finance system is limited by decades-old funding formulas in desperate need of updating. These outdated laws have resulted in a series of legal challenges, and in modern times, the legislature has only rewritten the laws when forced to do so by court order. This "band-aid" approach to fixing school finance ends with HB 3. Texas' current school finance system ties up billions of dollars in archaic funding mechanisms that are no longer supporting the needs of all students across our state. HB 3 eliminates these outdated funding formulas, freeing up billions of dollars for reinvestment into programs that meets the classroom needs of today's students and tomorrow's workforce.

HB 3 modernizes our school finance system and fundamentally transforms the way we fund our public schools. Supported by years of research, data and personal testimony, HB 3 formulaically realigns the entire school finance system to meet specific objectives. Objectives that accelerate student achievement, prioritize teacher quality, and invest more dollars per student than ever before.

HB 3 is built upon years of preparation, research, and witness testimony conducted and collected by Chairman Huberty, the House Public Education Committee, and the Texas Commission on Public School Finance. The Commission's findings are well worth the state's investment, and House Bill 3 includes an overwhelming majority of those recommendations.

Highlights of HB 3 include:

- Invests in Texas students and teachers by adding approximately \$9 billion in funding above enrollment growth and current law entitlement over the next two years;



TEXAS HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

James White

*House District 19
Jasper, Newton, Hardin, Polk, Tyler*

CORRECTIONS
CHAIR

REDISTRICTING

JUDICIARY &
CIVIL JURISPRUDENCE

- Empowers local school districts to put more money in their classrooms by raising the Basic Allotment from \$5,140 to \$6,030, an \$890 increase per student;
- Provides property tax reform by lowering school property tax rates by 4 cents statewide;
- Reduces recapture from \$7.7 billion to \$4.7 billion for the biennium, a \$3 billion or 38% reduction;
- Establishes an early reading program that funds full-day, high quality Pre-K for low-income students, setting the right foundation for students to be able to read at grade level by third grade;
- Substantially raises the minimum teacher salary schedule and allocates an addition \$140 million in funding for a teacher quality program, providing districts with the resources for recruiting and retaining teachers in the classroom;
- Enhances the yield on the "enrichment" pennies, allowing schools to earn and keep more money for property taxes levied above the standard Tier 1 tax rate;
- Creates a professional development grant program to train teachers in blended learning instruction so they can effectively combine e-learning and traditional classroom instruction;
- Dedicates more money for dual language immersion education, which has proven to be more effective in producing greater achievement levels for multilingual and native English speaking students;
- Equips districts with the resources needed to identify and intervene at the earliest signs of student dyslexia and related disorders;
- Establishes an extended year program that allows districts to combat "summer slide" by providing 30 days of half-day instruction for students in grades PreK-5 during the summer months;
- Updates the transportation funding model from a burdensome linear density model to a simplified one dollar per mile reimbursement;
- Allocates resources to low-income students on a sliding scale (rather than an equal weight) to prioritize students with the highest needs, and provides more funding to schools with higher concentrations of economically disadvantaged students and generational poverty;
- Quadruples the amount allocated to fast growth districts to build and equip new instructional facilities funding to \$100 million per year;
- Expands career and technology education programs for students in grades 6-12 (previously grades 9-12), making students more skilled and better prepared for the workforce or post-secondary education; and



TEXAS HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

James White

*House District 19
Jasper, Newton, Hardin, Polk, Tyler*

CORRECTIONS
CHAIR

REDISTRICTING

JUDICIARY &
CIVIL JURISPRUDENCE

- Establishes a grant program for districts to offer parents of economically disadvantaged students with learning disabilities in grades 3-8 access to additional services to help improve educational performance.

The Texas Plan benefits all students, districts and classrooms in District 19, because it empowers local school districts to put more money into classrooms. By committing to meaningful, lasting investments in Texas classrooms through House Bill 3, the Texas House is at the forefront of preparing our students for the demands of a bustling workforce and keeping the State of Texas a beacon of economic opportunity. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this critical legislation into law and thank them for their hard work in bringing this priority bill to fruition. To learn more, visit www.thetexasplan.com.

On International Women's Day, formerly incarcerated women, a bipartisan group of state lawmakers including those in the House Committee on Corrections, and members of the Texas Smart-On-Crime Coalition stood together to discuss the impact of the state's criminal justice system on women and to highlight proposed reforms under consideration by the Texas Legislature. It's heartening to see the increasingly broad-based, bipartisan support for criminal justice reform that's been fostered by organizations like the Texas Smart-On-Crime Coalition, formerly incarcerated women, and other advocacy organizations across our state. We can and must improve the treatment of women incarcerated in Texas' state correctional facilities. Some reforms filed in the Texas Legislature will ensure that these women are treated with dignity and that they can successfully rejoin their families and communities.

The event on the South Steps highlighted two of the bills I had the pleasure to lay out before my committee:

- HB 650: This legislation addresses concerns raised over the lack of specific standards regarding the care of incarcerated women. The bill seeks to address these concerns by setting out provisions regarding the treatment of incarcerated pregnant women, educational courses relating to pregnancy and parenting for pregnant inmates, and the education and training of employees of correctional facilities in which female inmates are housed.
- HB 659: Steps have been taken to provide services to youth with incarcerated parents. However, there is little data available regarding who those parents and children are. This legislation seeks to address the data gap by requiring the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to collect and share on an annual basis statistical information regarding parents



TEXAS HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

James White

*House District 19
Jasper, Newton, Hardin, Polk, Tyler*

CORRECTIONS
CHAIR

REDISTRICTING

JUDICIARY &
CIVIL JURISPRUDENCE

incarcerated in our state facilities. This data will help identify these families and provide services to prevent further involvement in the justice system.

This week, I also had the opportunity to extend a warm welcome to 9-1-1 service professionals and operators across the state through the passage of House Resolution 141. I was excited to be joined by Charlesetta Malone and Lonnie Hunt of DETCOG to recognize those 9-1-1 professionals in our district. These two are remarkable public servants that aim to promote safe communities in House District 19.

Dr. Paula Denson had the honor to serve as the Doctor of the Day for the Texas House on Friday, March 8th, 2019. I am proud to say that Dr. Denson is a remarkable and distinguished physician out in Woodville! She has also been my primary doctor for years.

The Capitol of Texas belongs to you and visiting the Capitol during the biennial legislative session is a great experience. To assist in arranging your visit please call Saul Mendoza, my Chief of Staff, at (512) 463-0490. Or, you can email him at saul.mendoza@house.texas.gov.

###

